

(7) No Judge in active service should find a seat in the Legislative Council.

As regards the above suggestions, the Member said that some objections were likely to be raised. It might be asked whether a non-official majority was desirable and whether it might not prove unworkable. His answer was that any undesirable legislation might be checked by the exercise of the power of with-holding assent to the proposed measure by His Highness. The non-official majority must be drawn from a purely electoral basis. The election of members for the respective divisions and of the representatives of agricultural interests might be left to the Assembly ; of course not to the Assembly as it stood at present constituted. The Assembly must be reconstituted and placed on a firmer— if possible on a statutory—basis.

In the reform of the Legislative Council, the Chief Justice of the High Court should not find a seat ; for that matter, there should be no Judge at all in the Legislative Council. Such a practice as that observed in Travancore of nominating the Chief Justice as a Member of the Legislative Council was probably derived from the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, formed in India about 60 years ago. There, that idea was immediately given up. There was no reason why such a system should linger on in Travancore alone.

It might be asked whether the improvement of the Legislative Council was going to prove the salvation of the country. The people of Travancore were perfectly aware that it would not work any miracle. But it was the first step which an ill-treated and helpless people could think of in trying to eradicate the manifold evils of the present administration and the one previous to it.

In conclusion, the Member expressed the hope that his proposal would be favourably considered by the Government.

Expansion and reform of the Legislative Council so as to increase its scope and usefulness.

Mr. K. Parameswaran Pillai, B. A., B. L. (Member, Quilon taluk) conveyed to the Government the gratitude and thankfulness of the Members of the Assembly as well as of the general public for strengthening the Legislative Council, by the addition of four more Members, to the maximum number allowed by the existing law. The representations that he was going to make were practically the same as those brought forward by him at the last session. He proposed to deal with them under three heads, *viz.*, the functions of the Council, its strength, and the method of recruitment of Members. In regard to the functions of the Council, he referred with regret to the fact that the Legislative Council here, which was one of the oldest having been started 25 years ago, remained the same today, though large reforms had, been introduced into the Councils in other parts of India. In his view, it was time enough that some changes were introduced. In the address presented by the Members at the close of the last session, it had been moved, for the sympathetic consideration of the Government, whether the time had not arrived for allowing the Annual Budget to be discussed in the Council and also for granting to the Council the right of interpellation and passing resolutions on subjects of public importance. It could not be said that the country was not ripe for being given those privileges, for Travancore was certainly not behind other States, which now enjoyed those privileges, either in point of education, intelligence or public spirit. On the other hand, it was in advance of them in many respects. The Member thought that it was unnecessary for him to reiterate the reasons for his view, as they had been fully dealt with by him last year.

The question whether the strength of the Council should be increased depended mainly upon the way in which the Government looked upon his first proposal. Because if the Council was to remain for the purpose merely of legislation, there was no need to raise the number of members from what it was now. The present strength was quite sufficient to discuss the Bills brought before the Council. In fact, even a small Committee, composed of gentlemen well-versed in the practice and theory of law, was quite sufficient to help the Government in carrying through the legislative Bills. If, on the other hand, the Government were prepared to go at least to a certain

extent in developing the functions of the Council, then it was necessary to considerably increase the strength. Because, in discussing the many matters of public importance, varied interests would come up for consideration.

In regard to the method of recruitment, it was necessary to allow to the people the privilege of election of all the non-official members of the Council as a *right*. At present it was being given from year to year as a sort of favor from the Government. If additional members were to be appointed to the Council, that should be by the method of election.

The Member stated that, in all that he mentioned above, there was a unanimity of opinion among the Members of the Assembly and those representatives of public opinion with whom he had occasion to talk about the subject.

The next point, he said, was perhaps a matter of minor detail upon which there was some difference of opinion. It was about the method of election. Some people would have it that the Members should represent interests, while there were others who thought that classes should also be represented. Speaking for himself, the Member would adhere to the opinion expressed by him last year that class representation should not be allowed; because it was not only wrong in principle and was inexpedient in the present state of the country, but it would also tend to create class feeling.

Dewan.—Do you propose that the election should continue to be done by the Members of this Assembly or would you create an electorate apart from the Assembly?

Member.—I should think that the Assembly is a sufficiently good electorate. It could divide itself into different electorates for the purpose, such as the Town Improvement Committees, Trading Classes, &c.

Dewan.—Do you not think that there should be some settlement on that point before we proceed further?

Member.—That, in the first place, affects only the way in which nomination or election should be made. I think, for the present, so far as I am concerned, that a certain number of seats may be reserved for nomination for the purpose of satisfying those who want class representation. The remaining seats may be filled up by regular election.

The Member then presented a memorial signed by 66 Members of the Assembly for the current Session, pressing the need for increasing the strength and widening the scope and usefulness of the Legislative Council.

The desirability of having a Jenmi Member in the Legislative Council.

Mr. Kesavar Vasudevar (Member, Jenmi, Padmanabhapuram Division) said that the Jenmies occupied the first place among those who were affected by the legislative measures passed from time to time. Owing to the absence in the Legislative Council of a Jenmi Member, the Jenmies were labouring under serious disabilities. A memorial on the subject was submitted to the Government at the last session, but there had been no redress of their grievances yet. Even the European Planters, who owned very few landed properties in the State, were allowed a Member in the Council. The necessity for allowing a representative from the real landed proprietors of the country would thus be apparent. The Member therefore prayed that hereafter at least the Travancore Jenmi Maha Sabha might be permitted to nominate a representative from the community as a Member of the Legislative Council.

The desirability of having a Mahomedan Member in the Legislative Council.

Mr. Shaik Mahomed Hamidani Thangal (Member, Nominated) said that his request was for appointing a Mahomedan Member to the Legislative Council. The progress of the community depended greatly on their religious faith, and though there